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STANDARD FORM NO. 64

Office Memorandum • UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

TO : Mr. A. H. Belmont

FROM : G. H. Scatterday

SUBJECT: ARTHUR MEIER SCHLESINGER, JR.
JAMES BARRETT RESTON

March 10, 1959

b7E

Limited Classification Review Conducted See Top Sec. Form 4-774
TOP SECRET
FOI/PA # 314057
APPEAL NO.
CIVIL ACT. #
REQ. # 12352
DATE 7/31/90 INITIALS

Director
Sullivan
Tavel
Mohr
Nease
Parsons
Rosen
Tamm
Trotter
W.C. Sullivan
Tele. Room
Holloman
Gandy

SYNOPSIS:

Pursuant to Director's request 3-6-59, Bureau files checked to furnish information to James Hagerty, Press Secretary, White House. Arthur Meier Schlesinger, Jr., Harvard University professor, investigated under European Recovery Program, 1948. No one interviewed indicated him to be communist or sympathizer. Described as anticommunist liberal, extremely learned; leader for freedom of expression; and opposed to investigations and witch hunts. One person said he was "liberal throughout Roosevelt era and like so many other liberals was pro-Soviet." Father, Schlesinger, Sr., member or affiliated with numerous Communist Party (CP) fronts. Morris Ernst said father was not communist but that activities in defending civil rights involved him in CP front groups. Schlesinger, Jr., came to Bureau; interviewed by Nichols; admitted father had belonged to or affiliated with numerous CP fronts and admitted he had criticized House Committee on Un-American Activities. Schlesinger, Jr., questioned FBI's efficiency and said espionage rampant in Washington, 1930's; inferred political and intellectual freedoms intimidated by FBI. He was set straight by Director's letter, 3/50. Active in Americans for Democratic Action many years; wrote speeches Adlai Stevenson, 1952 presidential campaign. His writings have been anti-communist and has been attacked by communist press many times. Enclosed letter to Mr. Hagerty sets forth information in our files appropriate for his use. James B. Reston, head of Washington Bureau of "New York Times" newspaper has not been investigated by the Bureau and files contain no information to show association with CP or front groups. Reston is known to highly placed Government officials and apparently has good contacts for receiving news items. Tass News Agency considers Reston to be reliable with good sources at White House. Reston critical of administration in article in connection with Harry Dexter White case. Appeared before Senate Subcommittee in 1950 and questioned regarding methods and contacts in obtaining news from State Department. Article in "Counterattack" critical of Reston, 1/53. Reston inquired of State Department 6/55 to verify shake-up of FBI New York Office in connection with Yugoslavian surveillances.

DownGraded to Secret 60324 uc BAW/RS/ucf

Enclosures

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JWB/JDM/nmn
(5)
1 - Mr. Belmont
1 - Name Check Section
1 -
1 -

REC- 64

MAR 27 1959

Copy Sent To Mr. Tolson

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Memorandum Scatterday to Belmont
Re: ARTHUR MEIER SCHLESINGER, JR.
JAMES BARRETT RESTON

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Corresponded with Attorney General in 1956 regarding FBI investigation of Times office boy who was seen coming out of Czech Embassy [redacted] b7E "Imperialist." Case closed 2/59. In article "Editor and Publisher," 4/58, Reston critical of Jim Hagerty. Enclosed letter to Mr. Hagerty also sets forth information on Reston appropriate for his use.

ACTION:

If you approve, the enclosed letter to Mr. Hagerty go forth.

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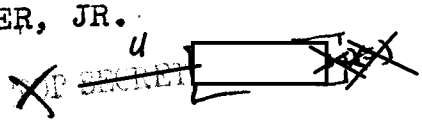

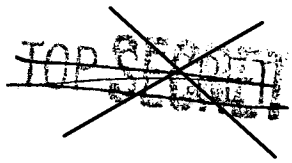

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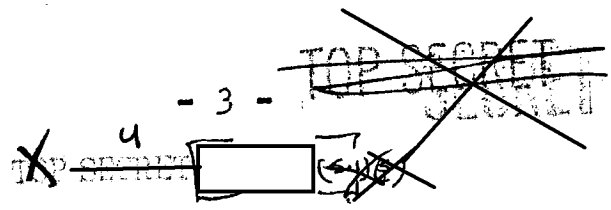
DETAILS

Pursuant to the Director's request of March 6, 1959, Bureau files have been reviewed with the purpose in mind of providing information to Mr. James Hagerty, The Press Secretary, The White House, which may be of interest to him concerning the above-captioned individuals.

Schlesinger, a Harvard University professor, was investigated by the Bureau under the European Recovery Program in 1948. No one interviewed alleged that he is or was a communist or a communist sympathizer. He was described by most as a violently anticommunist liberal. Morris Ernst gave him an unqualified recommendation. One individual said he was a "liberal throughout the Roosevelt era and like so many other liberals was pro-Soviet." This statement, an isolated one, is the only information that we have indicating any pro-Soviet feeling on the part of Schlesinger, Jr. Since World War II he has become increasingly aware of communist tactics and strategy, including front organizations and has actively written against all sides of them. All persons interviewed believed him to be entirely loyal to the United States. He was described as a New Deal liberal; extremely learned; a leader for freedom of expression; anticommunist; and opposed to "investigations and witchhunts."

Professor Arthur M. Schlesinger, Sr., also a Harvard professor, has belonged to many organizations declared subversive by the Attorney General. Some information in our files can be definitely imputed to Schlesinger, Sr.; much of it because identifying data is lacking cannot be imputed to either Junior or Senior Schlesinger. It is noted also that some information received from other Government agencies and information contained in Senate Committee reports is incorrectly attributed to Schlesinger, Jr., for we have information in our files which shows that the activities are definitely attributed to Schlesinger, Sr. Morris Ernst said Schlesinger, Sr., is not a communist but that his activities in defending "civil rights" involved him in several communist front groups.

In July, 1948, W. Averell Harriman, Economic Cooperation Administration wanted Schlesinger, Jr., to assist him in Paris.



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Information was brought to the Bureau's attention that Schlesinger, Jr., could not be cleared to go over seas and it was indicated that possibly this was brought about by a mix-up in the identity between Junior and Senior Schlesinger. At this time Schlesinger, Jr., came to the Bureau and talked with Mr. Nichols in detail, pointing out his anticommunist feelings as indicated by his writings. He denied any affiliation with communist groups but admitted that his father had belonged to and supported various communist fronts. He admitted that he had in a speech given in Boston during May, 1947, taken off on the House Committee on Un-American Activities for their "unwarranted interference in our democratic way of life."

Schlesinger, Jr., has on more than one occasion criticized FBI use of informants, questioned the FBI's efficiency, stating that a great deal of communist espionage went on in Washington in the 1930's under the nose of the FBI without being uncovered. He inferred that political and intellectual freedoms are intimidated by the FBI. Schlesinger, in a letter dated March 15, 1950, from the Director, was told that his attack was manifestly unfair and pointed out why.

Schlesinger has on various occasions denounced the House Un-American Activities Committee. He has for many years been active in the Americans for Democratic Action; was a speech writer for Adlai Stevenson during his campaign for the presidency; has been an ardent speaker for civil liberties; has defended the rights of communists to follow their political philosophies as long as they keep within the rules of the law. On the other hand, our files contain many references indicating Schlesinger's anticommunist feelings and show that he has been attacked innumerable times by the communist press for his attacks on communists in his various writings. For example, Schlesinger attended an Inter-American Conference for Democracy and Liberty in Havana, Cuba, during May, 1950, as one of several United States delegates. The conference adopted a declaration repudiating communism and criticized specifically certain communists and attacked Latin American dictatorships. The "Daily Worker" severely criticized Schlesinger for his book "The Vital Center." This book dealt with the future of the Non-Communist Left and the necessity for divorcing itself from communist influence.

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~~TOP SECRET~~ U [redacted] ~~(U)~~ ~~TOP SECRET~~ b7E

James Barrett Reston was born in Clidebank, Scotland, November 3, 1909, and has been associated with the Washington Bureau of the "New York Times" since 1941. The Bureau has not conducted any investigation concerning Reston, and our files failed to show Reston associated with the Communist Party or any front groups. References in Bureau files indicate Reston well known to many highly placed Government officials and apparently has contacts among Government agencies to receive major news releases prior to the official release. [redacted] b7E

[redacted] (U) According to articles appearing in our files, Reston is anticommunist and has been attacked by such communist publications as the "Worker," "Narodni Glasnik" and "American Soviet Facts."

In an article in November, 1953, in connection with the Harry Dexter White case, Reston wrote "There is some reason to believe that the FBI checked Mr. White's telephones and, for a time during the war, even opened his mail." Following the Director's testimony in the White case, Reston wrote an article describing the Director's testimony as "brilliant and an extraordinary performance." Reston contacted Assistant to the Director Nichols in November, 1953, to discuss problems growing out of the White case. Nichols told him we could not help, and the Director noted "Properly handled. This fellow has slanted all his articles against us and never made any effort to get the facts ---."

Tass News Agency reportedly considers columns by Reston to reliably reflect the administrative policy of President Eisenhower and feels that Reston's reports come from sources very close to the inner sanctum of the White House.

In Whittaker Chamber's book "Witness" he states that Reston was asked by John Foster Dulles for his opinion of Alger Hiss as a possible candidate for the presidency of Carnegie Endowment, and Reston replied that Hiss would be a very good choice. Reston was involved with Atomic Energy Commission Chairman Strauss in 1954 when he allegedly had the full story of nonclearance action against Robert Oppenheimer by the Atomic Energy Commission. Reston obtained a copy of the Yalta documents from Carl W. McCardle of the State Department in March, 1955, prior to official release.

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[redacted] b7E

(U) [redacted] "Imperialist," b7E

[redacted] "Imperialist" or interview of Reston. [redacted]

[redacted] of Foreign Operations Administration stated in April, 1955, that Harold Stassen believes he has Reston "pegged for being a New Dealer and one who is not pro-Russian but would get great delight out of embarrassing the administration." Reston in telephonic conversation with Robert Murphy, State Department, on June 2, 1955, attempted to verify information received by him of a shake-up of the New York FBI office as a result of exposure of surveillances on Yugoslavian Embassy officials. b6 b7C

Reston wrote a letter to former Attorney General Brownell in February, 1955, in which he enclosed a statement of an office boy of the Washington Bureau of the "New York Times" stating that the office boy had reason to believed the FBI was checking on him as a result of seeing him come out of the Czechoslovakian Embassy. According to Reston the office boy was picking up passports for Times personnel.

According to an article appearing in the "Editor and Publisher" of March 15, 1958, the "New York Times" column "Random Notes" March 10, 1958, is quoted in part as follows: "The administration practice of having gumshoes shadow reporters to detect their sources for delicate news stories continues unabated here (Washington)." --- "It has become standard practice when the administration is particularly annoyed at seeing one of its secrets in print to force underlings to sign affidavits swearing they did not leak the story. In some cases telephones are tapped both within and without the Government --" The article contained a reply from James C. Hagerty as "It's certainly news to me; I just don't believe it -- there is nothing like that down here." James R. Reston, Times Bureau Chief is quoted as saying, "Its obvious to us that Jim Hagerty knows very little about what has been going on around here for the last fifteen years. If he did he wouldn't be 'surprised.' The Democrats did it and these fellows (the Republicans) are doing it."

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~~TOP SECRET~~ [redacted] ~~(S)~~ ~~TOP SECRET~~ b7E

The information in the enclosed letter to Mr. Hagerty sets forth all information available in our files suitable for his use. Some information consisting of rumor and unverified allegations has not been furnished as it would not appear appropriate for dissemination.

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